

Message Text

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STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: MPOL, ETEL, MARR, GW
SUBJECT: US PROBLEMS WITH FRG BUNDESPOST

REF: BONN 481 (STADIS)

1. DURING JANUARY 13 CALL ON FRG POSTAL MINISTRY STATE SECRETARY ELIAS, ECON/COMM MINISTER-COUNSELOR TOLD ELIAS U.S. MILITARY PROBLEMS WITH BUNDESPOST WOULD COME UP DURING WASHINGTON VISIT, AND WENT OVER ISSUES WHICH MIGHT BE DISCUSSED. ELIAS WRYL Y NOTED THAT HE HAD HOPED TO AVOID DISCUSSING SUCH MATTERS DURING HIS TRIP.

2. ON THE SPECIFIC MATTER OF THE RHEIN-MAIN PBX SYSTEM, THE MINISTER-COUNSELOR SAID THAT THE BUNDESPOST ATTITUDE RAISED SUSPICIONS THAT THE PROBLEMS RAISED BY THE BUNDESPOST STEMMED FROM COMMERCIAL, RATHER THAN TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS AND STRESSED THAT THE U.S. WOULD HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY JUSTIFYING ADDITIONAL FUNDS FROM THE U.S. CONGRESS TO PAY FOR TELEPHONE INSTALLATIONS WHICH WERE NOT ABSOLUTELY REQUIRED FOR OUR NATIONAL SECURITY.

3. ELIAS REPLIED THAT HE HAD BEEN WORKING ON THIS
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CASE FOR ALMOST TWO MONTHS. HE SAID SIEMENS, THE PBX SUPPLIER, CAUSED THE PROBLEM SINCE THE FIRM DID NOT CLEARLY EXPLAIN TO THE U.S. MILITARY THAT USING THE SIEMENS SYSTEM WOULD CREATE ATTENUATION PROBLEMS FOR SOME U.S. TELEPHONES. ELIAS STATED THAT BECAUSE OF ATTENUATION DIFFICULTIES, THE BUNDESPOST COULD NOT ALLOW THE RHEIN/MAIN PBX TELEPHONE SYSTEM, AS IT IS

NOW CONSTITUTED, TO BE SWITCHED INTO THE FRG'S OFFICIAL NETWORK. AT THE SAME TIME IT WAS RIDICULOUS TO HAVE PBX IN PLACE WITHOUT USING IT. HE SAID HE TALKED TO SIEMENS RECENTLY AND ARRIVED AT WHAT HE HOPES IS A SOLUTION.

4. ELIAS EXPLAINED THAT SIEMENS WOULD PROPOSE TO THE US AIR FORCE THAT THE COMPANY BUY THE RHEIN/MAIN TELEPHONE SETS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE SYSTEM AND GIVE THE AIR FORCE NEW ONES TO FIT THE PBX SYSTEM. IF THIS PROPOSAL WERE NOT ACCEPTABLE, SIEMENS WOULD BE PREPARED TO ADJUST THE PRESENT SETS TO FIT THE PBX SYSTEM. HE SAID IF THIS SOLUTION WERE ACCEPTABLE, IT SHOULD ALSO WORK FOR GARLSTEDT, THUS ELIMINATING PROBLEMS WITH THE PBX THERE.

5. THE MINISTER-COUNSELOR ASKED WHETHER THE NEW SETS WOULD THEN REQUIRE BUNDESPOST MAINTENANCE. ELIAS REPLIED HE WAS NOT INFORMED ON THIS POSSIBILITY AND WOULD EXAMINE THE MATTER. THE MINISTER-COUNSELOR SUGGESTED IT WAS TIME TO BRING BOTH SIDES TOGETHER TO EXAMINE THE ISSUES AND RESOLVE THE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS.

6. ELIAS SAID THEY WERE ALSO WORKING ON THE ETEL PROBLEM AND WOULD SHORTLY HAVE PROPOSALS TO RESOLVE THIS PROBLEM.

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7. THE MINISTER-COUNSELOR ALSO RAISED THE ISSUE OF PREFERRED RATES FOR OUT OF AREA TIE-LINES FOR THE U.S. MILITARY. ELIAS SAID HE WORKED WITH THE FOREIGN OFFICE ON THIS PROBLEM FOR ABOUT SIX WEEKS AND EXPECTED A SOLUTION TO BOTH SIDES IN THE VERY NEAR FUTURE.

8. ASSUMING THAT ELIAS' REMARKS PROVIDE THE WAY TO A SOLUTION OF THE PBX ISSUE, EMBASSY SUGGESTS DEPARTMENT EMPHASIZE NEED FOR US TO HAVE A MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE. WE SHOULD ALSO STRESS THAT IT IS HARD FOR US TO JUSTIFY POLITICALLY U.S. EXPENDITURES IN EXCESS OF THE ABSOLUTE MINIMUM REQUIRED FOR OUR MUTUAL SECURITY.

STOESSEL

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